

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, MASS, JO, US, XF
SUBJECT: US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO JORDAN: TACTICS AND TIMING

REF: A) AMMAN 3951, B) AMMAN 3952

1. THIS THE THE THIRD OF THREE CABLES ON THE SUBJECT
OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO JORDAN.
REFTELS PROVIDED POLITICAL AND MILITARY ANALYSIS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS ON KING HUSSEIN'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MILITARY
AID. SOME DISCUSSION MAY ALSO BE HELPFUL OF OUR TACTICS AND TIMING
IN HANDLING THE RECOMMENDED PROGRAM.

2. HUSSEIN OFTEN HAS BEEN MENTIONED AS A NECESSARY ADDITION TO
THE PEACE PROCESS. OUR POSITION TOWARD JORDAN HAS BEEN BASED ON
MAINTAINING A MODERATE AND STABLE REGIME AS THE KEY ELEMENT IN
THE WEST BANK/GAZA SETTLEMENT, WHICH ITSELF HAS BECOME THE KEY
ELEMENT IN THE TOTAL PEACE PROCESS. IN PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS
OF HUSSEIN'S PROPENSITY TO JOIN IN NEGOTIATIONS, WE
HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT A NUMBER OF FACTORS WILL INFLUENCE KING
HUSSEIN'S DECISION TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS. AMONG THE MOST
CRITICAL WILL BE A SENSE THAT THE PROCESS CAN REALLY GO SOMEWHERE,

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A FEELING THAT THE U.S. IS ABLE AND PREPARED TO MOVE THE PROCESS
FORWARD AS A PARTICIPANT, NOT MERELY AS A POSTMAN, AND FINALLY
THAT EITHER THE MAJORITY OF ARAB STATES SUPPORT HIS MOVE OR
THAT HE REMAINS STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST THE INEVITABLE
PRESSURES RAISED AGAINST HIM IF SOME ARABS DECIDE TO USE
MILITARY FORCE AND SUBVERSION TO COUNTER A MOVE INTO THE
NEGOTIATIONS ON HIS PART.

3. WE HAVE EXAMINED THE LEVEL OF THE ACTIVE ARAB THREAT AGAINST HUSSEIN IN REFTELS. WE BELIEVE HE CAN MEET FOR THE TIME BEING THE SUBVERSIVE ASPECTS OF SUCH A THREAT WITH THE EQUIPMENT AND MANPOWER AT HIS COMMAND. AS REFTELS SHOW, THE MOVEMENT OF IRAQI OR SYRIAN ARMORED FORCES WOULD POSE AN ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT PROBLEM. HERE HUSSIN'S PRESENT FORCES REQUIRE UPGRADING. HIS REQUEST FOR MORE AID IN GENERAL MAKES SENSE IN THIS CONTEXT. IT IS MODERATE AND MODEST WITH BUT A VERY FEW EXCEPTIONS, PARTICULARLY IN COMPARISON TO WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE REGION (REF. A).

4. IN ADDITION, HUSSEIN UNDERSTANDS CLEARLY THAT AN EFFORT BY THE U.S. TO INCREASE ITS SUPPORT WILL PROVIDE SEVERAL OTHER IMPORTANT BENEFITS TO HIM. THE INCREASE IN U.S. AID WILL HELP TO SOLIDIFY U.S. TIES OF SUPPORT WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL IF JORDAN IS TO SURVIVE ANY CONCERTED MILITARY ATTACK. INDEED, WHILE INCREASED EQUIPMENT WILL HELP HUSSEIN AND JORDAN TO SURVIVE THE FIRST FEW DAYS OR WEEK OF AN ATTACK, IT IS ONLY THE DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT OF THE U.S. WHICH WILL MAKE THE BREATHING SPACE MEANINGFUL IN THE LONG RUN. IT IS THE INCREASED AID WHICH IS THE CERTAIN EVIDENCE TO OTHERS, IN HUSSEIN'S VIEW, THAT THE U.S. WILL ASSIST IN THAT POST-BREATHING SPACE PERIOD. FINALLY TOO, ADDITIONAL
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U.S. AID TO ASSURE THAT HUSSEIN'S FORCES CAN ACCOMPLISH THIS MISSION WILL CARRY WITH IT SOME NOTION OF A U.S. SECURITY UMBRELLA OVER JORDAN, AS IT DOES IN THE AIR-CRAFT DEAL WITH SAUDI ARABIA--A POINT JORDAN'S POTENTIAL ARAB ADVERSARIES WILL NOT MISS HOWEVER REMOTE OR STRAINED SUCH A VIEW MIGHT APPEAR FROM THE WASHINGTON OPTIC.

5. BECAUSE NO VISIT BY KING HUSSEIN TO WASHINGTON IS PLANNED FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, THE PROBLEM OF THE REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE GETTING OUT AHEAD OF THE TIMING OF HIS POSSIBLY JOINING NEGOTIATIONS WOULD SEEM TO BE UNDER CONTROL AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT. RATHER THE PRELIMINARY STEPS OF HELPING TO CREATE AN INITIAL SOMEWHAT RECEPTIVE CLIMATE FOR HUSSEIN'S JOINING WOULD SEEM TO BE THE MORE PRESSING PROBLEM TO BE OVERCOME. WHILE A GENEROUS U.S. RESPONSE TO HUSSEIN'S REQUEST WOULD SEEM TO BE BEST HANDLED EXCLUSIVELY IN THE CONTEXT OF A "QUID" FOR HUSSEIN'S "QUO" OF JOINING THE NEGOTIATIONS, IT IS NOT INCONCEIVABLE, GIVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF POTENTIAL FAILURE OR FRUSTRATION IN OF THE PEACE EFFORTS, THAT HUSSEIN WILL WANT TO CONTINUE TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON FOR MORE MILITARY AID. INDEED, DELINKING SUCH AID FROM THE PEACE PROCESS IS

PROBABLY A LONG-STANDING OBJECTIVE OF HIS TO MAXIMIZE BENEFITS WHILE MINIMIZING DANGERS. IN SUCH CASE, WE WILL HAVE TO ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE WANT TO BE FORTHCOMING IN ANY WAY IN ADVANCE OF A CRUNCH POINT, OR WHETHER WE WOULD PREFER TO PRESERVE FLEXIBILITY UNTIL IT IS CLEAR THAT ALL OF OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE CHIPS CAN BE PLAYED IN THE SINGLE HIGH STAKES GAME OF "JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS."

6. WE FEEL AT THIS POINT AT LEAST THAT THE LATTER STRATEGY MAKES SENSE, BUT THAT THERE MAY SOON COME A TIME WHEN WE WOULD WANT TO USE SOME OF OUR CAPACITY TO ASSIST HUSSEIN TO KEEP HIM IN A MODERATE AND HELPFUL POSITION, I.E., PREVENT DETERIORATION IN OUR RELATIONSHIP, AND ALSO TO REBUILD SOME OF HIS PRESENTLY SHAKEN CONFIDENCE IN THE U.S. AND ITS
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WORLD ROLE. THESE TACTICAL REQUIREMENTS MIGHT WELL DICTATE THE USE OF SUCH STEPS AS AN INCREASED PROGRAM FOR ONE YEAR, OR THE RELEASE OF SOME WEAPONS CURRENTLY NOT AVAILABLE TO JORDAN, RATHER THAN THE FULL PACKAGE--DISCUSSED REFTELS. WE SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS ALSO NOT TO COMMIT ALL OF OUR ASSETS WITH HUSSEIN TO HIS ENTRY INTO NEGOTIATIONS, RECOGNIZING THAT THERE WILL BE ON-GOING PROBLEMS WITHIN THE NEGOTIATIONS, IF AND WHEN WE GET HIM STARTED ON THEM, IN WHICH OUR HELP AND INFLUENCE WILL BE CRUCIAL.

7. FINALLY, WE HOPE THAT THE VARIOUS FUNDING OPTIONS ARE GIVEN CAREFUL STUDY. IN SOME WAYS THE PACKAGE IN TERMS OF HARDWARE IS NOT ALL THAT IMPRESSIVE, ALTHOUGH IN MONEY TERMS, AS A MEASURE OF THE INFLATION IN THE PRICE OF ARMAMENTS, THE NEARLY ONE BILLION DOLLAR FIGURE IS LARGE BY ANY SCALE. SPREADING IT OVER THE PERIOD OF FIVE OR SIX YEARS WILL OF COURSE HELP ENORMOUSLY. SO TOO WILL BRINGING IN A MORE SOLID CONSORTIUM OF ARAB OIL BACKERS TO DO THEIR SHARE ON FMS CREDIT REPAYMENT. THE TOTAL AMOUNT IS OF COURSE LESS THAN 50 PERCENT OF WHAT WE HAVE RECENTLY PROVIDED TO ISRAEL IN ANY ONE YEAR. ITS VALUE INTERMS OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST COULD BE ENORMOUSLY BENEFICIAL AND AT THE RIGHT TIME MAY EVEN BE CRUCIAL.

8. RIGHT NOW, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD STUDY CAREFULLY HUSSEIN'S NEEDS WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING THE ANNUAL ASSISTANCE FIGURE TO DOLS 180 MILLION AS RECOMMENDED IN A LONG-TERM PROGRAM IN ORDER TO (A) USE IT TO INDUCE HIM TO JOIN THE NEGOTIATION WHEN THE PROSPECTS FOR PROGRESS ARE CONSIDERABLY IMPROVED; (B) USE IT TO HELP HIM IF THE PEACE PROCESS CANNOT BE CONTINUED; OR (C) USE PORTIONS OF IT, IF NECESSARY, TO MAINTAIN U.S. CREDIBILITY, AND STABILITY AND MODERATION IN JORDAN AS PEACE PROCESS EVOLVES,
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INDEED IF A HUSSEIN VISIT DOES COME AT SOME POINT, IT WOULD
SEEM ONLY PRUDENT THAT ALL OF OUR PREPARATIONS SHOULD BE COMPLETED
WELL IN ADVANCE.
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